The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news economic and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the federal, legislative, and judicial fields, and considers such matters from the benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1806 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1945 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 25, NO. 47

Thru Payroll Savings

LABOR, USA

Washington, D. C.—The twentieth edition of the American Federationist of the Air, broadcast on the "Labor, USA" program over the American Broadcasting Company network, included the following outstanding feature articles to supplement the news.

Rosie the Riveter

By MRS. HERMAN H. LOWE

President of the American Federation of Women's Auxiliaries of Labor

American women don't look for chivalry in the world of dollars and cents. But they do expect fair play. They are not getting it now.

Only a few months ago "Rosie the Riveter" was a national heroine. Today factory doors are being slammed in her face.

To a certain extent this was expected. Many women took war jobs strictly on a temporary basis. Those women responded out of a patriotic desire to help win the war are now retiring in the same patriotic spirit to make room for returning veterans. Those who had to work because their husbands were fighting overseas will be more than willing to resume homekeeping again when their men come home and take over the breadwinning duties of the family.

But how about the women who will continue to need jobs in order to support themselves and perhaps dependents? What is happening to them?

A survey just completed by the United States Employment Service tells the story in cold figures. In three cities which were studied women represented from 60 to 77 percent of the total applicants for jobs. Yet, of the job openings, from 60 to 81 percent specified "men only."

That's only part of the story. The pay offered for the jobs available to women, this government survey showed, is from 40 to 81 percent less than they received before. In other words a woman war worker who lost a $50 a week job after V-J Day is now being offered only $25 a week on a new job.

These bitter experiences are teaching American working women the value of union membership. A. F. of L. unions not only protect the job security of women members through seniority systems but they prevent wage discrimination by insisting on the principle of equal pay for equal work. The American Federation of Labor strongly favors legislation by Congress to make this principle the law of the land.

Women union members make better citizens. They realize the power of their vote and exercise it. They respect rationing regulations and refuse to buy black market goods. They are the most consistent purchasers of Victory bonds. And finally, they have learned to look for the union label when they shop. Housewives know that the union label guarantees not only that the article is made in America, under sanitary conditions and by firms which treat labor fairly.

Labor-Management Conference

By JOSEPH A. PADWAY

Chief Counsel for the AFL

The Labor-Management Conference is now entering its final stages. The committees assigned to bring about agreement by employer and worker representatives on ways and means of promoting industrial peace are completing their work.

The next step will be for the executive committee to go over these reports, eliminate duplications and integrate the recommendations into a well-rounded and complete program for presentation to the full conference for adoption.

It would be well for the public to remember that the duty of this conference is to develop a long-range program for the promotion of industrial peace. It is not a collective bargaining conference. It cannot sit in judgment on the merits of pending disputes. Nor can it attempt to set forth a national wage policy for the solution of existing disputes.

Current wage problems are serious. It would be a mistake to think otherwise. But President Truman, in his recent radio address, emphasized that the government does not intend to exercise controls or to attempt to write a new wage formula for the postwar period. He said that in a free economy wages should be determined by collective bargaining between the individual employer and the union representing his workers in accordance with the facts in each case. That is sound doctrine.

Perhaps the value of the Labor-Management Conference can be best judged at this time by the report of the Committee on Initial Collective Agreements. This committee dealt with problems affecting plants where union-management relations are being undertaken for the first time.

First recommendation of the committee was for both sides to engage in genuine collective bargaining for the purpose of seeking peaceful agreement which should be incorporated into a written contract. If an agreement cannot be reached by such direct negotiation, the committee recommended that local, state or federal mediation be called in to help. As a final step, when conciliation fails, the committee suggested submission of the disputed issues to voluntary arbitration.

In my opinion, such procedure, honestly carried out, will go a long way toward reducing strikes and lockouts.

Report From Paris

By ROBERT J. WATT

AFL International Representative

I have just returned from Paris where, as the American workers' delegate, I attended the 27th Conference of the International Labor Organization.

Despite its name, the ILO is not a labor organization. Governments, employers and workers receive equal representation. At the Paris meeting, forty-six nations, including the United States, took part.

It appears likely now that the ILO will become the economic arm of the United Nations Organization. Moving toward that goal, the conference severed the ILO's constitutional ties to the defunct League of Nations, with which it originally was linked.

The delegates likewise expressed full agreement with the economic provisions of the San Francisco charter pledging the United Nations to work for a fuller and richer life for all "without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion."

Of course, there was no question as to endorsement of the main objective of the United Nations Organization—lasting international peace.

In its own field, the ILO took several significant actions during the Paris meeting. First it emphasized the basic need of maintaining a full employment in all nations during the period of industrial reconversion and it recommended ways and means to be brought to the attention of governments of the various countries.

The conference also urged the establishment of minimum standards of social policy in dependent territories to mitigate the evils existing in colonies of far-flung empires.

A "youth charter" was adopted by the delegates for the purpose of protecting children and young workers from exploitation. International agreements were drafted on this subject for ratification by the member nations.

To most Americans, the recommendations of the ILO may appear tame because our country has advanced far beyond the standards which the ILO seeks to establish internationally. But we must remember that this is one world and that our own progress may be braked by the lack of progress in backward nations. To that extent the work of the ILO is of deep importance to us.

For more than a quarter of a century the ILO has provided an international forum where men and women from many countries have met together, discussed common problems and gained mutual understanding. The record of its achievements cannot be tabulated except in terms of human betterment. Perhaps its major function has been to educate the world in social justice and economic democracy. As part of the United Nations Organization, the ILO in the future will have wider opportunities to forge instruments of international law for the progress of mankind.

SAY, LISTEN!

For the rest of this year, the AFL presents each Saturday evening at 6:45 P.M., EST, over the nation-wide network of the American Broadcasting Company a radio news-magazine, featuring the latest news at home and abroad and special reports by expert commentators on important labor problems. This program is listed in the radio columns of your newspaper as "Labor-U.S.A." Our own subtitle for the program is "The American Federationist of the Air." Don't miss these bright, newsy broadcasts! Listen every Saturday night!

Green Offers Legion Wide Program For Joint Labor-Veterans Action

Chicago—AFL President William Green told the American Legion in a challenging address that the future security of veterans and workers depends upon finding international peace and national prosperity.

The nation's debt to those who fought and won the war, Mr. Green said, can only be redeemed by "making good our sacred pledge that the last war shall be the last world war" and by according to the living "the full opportunity for a decent living."

Mr. Green emphasized that organized labor is deeply conscious of its obligations to servicemen and is insistent that they get a fair break in civilian life.

"But the basic economic problems of the nation's servicemen cannot be adequately met by preferences granting their legal rights or even by extending preferential treatment to them," Mr. Green said.

"In the long run, it would become a tragic mistake to place them in a unique class, separate and apart from their fellow citizens. I am convinced that the veterans themselves do not want anything like that. They know that they must stand or fall together with all other Americans. They realize that their chances of getting ahead depend upon whether all of us, as a nation, can succeed in making our democracy move forward.

"Unless there is full employment in America, veterans as well as workers will suffer. Unless we recapture prosperity, there will be talk of the kind of depression along with the rest of the people."

Declaring that veterans will not be satisfied with limited opportunities because they know so much more can be made available for all by unified national effort, Mr. Green then dramatically stated labor's program. He said:

"The question, then, is shall we have full employment? Labor says yes. Shall we speed up the lagging peace of reconversion? Labor says yes. Shall we expand peacetime production to the point where the needs of the American people can be met? Labor hopes that industry's answer will be yes.

"Shall we establish full employment at wages high enough to allow our people to purchase the products of farm and factory and thereby keep the wheels of production turning at full speed? Labor insists the answer must be yes.

"Shall labor and industry try to get together on a voluntary and cooperative basis which will respect each other's rights and freedoms yet provide assurance for industrial peace? The American Federation of Labor says yes.

"Shall we halt government encroachment upon the daily lives of our people and drop wartime controls as rapidly as safety permits? Again the answer is yes.

"These are the essentials of an economic program on which the nation's workers and the nation's veterans can unite wholeheartedly with all other Americans. It will take more than wishful thinking to carry out this program, but the American people do not mind hard work if it is going to get them somewhere."

To prevent future wars, Mr. Green urged strengthening of the United Nations organization and the highest degree of international defense.

He said the AFL shared the antagonism of the veterans to Fascism, Nazism, Communism or any other form of totalitarianism. Throughout its history, he said, the AFL has staunchly resisted the infiltration of such subversive influences into the ranks of labor and we are determined to carry on that policy even more firmly in the future."

Mr. Green lightly told the Legion labor disagreed with its views on compulsory, universal military training.

"New scientific developments," he said, "have taken this issue out of the controversial field. The atomic bomb, jet propulsion and rockets are bound to revolutionize the whole concept of warfare. If war ever breaks out again, it will not be fought by large standing armies, arrayed against each other face to face, but by death-spouting machines which can wipe out entire cities and kill millions while operating thousands of miles from the object of attack.

"In the first place we cannot contemplate or permit such a war because it would destroy civilization itself. In the second place, to prevent such a catastrophe from occurring we must concentrate on developing our scientific and mechanical equipment to such a point that no aggressor will dare to fire the first shot. We cannot defend ourselves by mobilizing after our enemy by compelling all our young men to spend a year of their lives learning how to do squads right or squads left, or how to shoot out-moded rifles."

Mr. Green assured the legion convention that "as time goes on, all veterans will find that labor is going to be right by their corner, fighting with them for the things they want, protecting them against exploitation and joining with them in making America a land of peace and plenty."

Jobless Cannot Be Forced To Take Work At Lesser Skills In New York

Albany, N. Y.—An unemployed person in New York can refuse, indistinctly below his accustomed level and receive benefits under unemployment insurance, the State Unemployment Insurance Advisory Council made clear in a test of its interpretation here.

The council, which said all its 5 members were in agreement, laid down its rules under 2 headings—including cases of individuals.

Under each heading, the council made two principal statements. Under the first, it said:

"1. Under the law, it is the claimant's own training and experience which control in determining the suitability of the job offer.

"2. Where labor market conditions show no reasonable prospect for employment at the claimant's top skills, it is proper to offer him jobs utilizing his closest comparable or related skills."

Under the second heading, the council ruled:

"1. Where the work offered is reasonably suited to the claimant's training and experience, the offer is proper when it is made at the wage which prevails for similar work in the locality.

"2. Where there is evidence that a job is offered at a wage which is designed to depress wage rate standards, the job offer is improper."

AFL Wants To Help China Secure Democracy And Free Trade Unions

Washington, D. C.—The Committee on International Labor Relations of the American Federation of Labor pledged support to the Chinese people in their efforts to build a constitutional democracy and to develop a real free movement. The committee made public the following statement out-lining the AFL's views:

"We are much concerned for the future of China and its national struggle to find for its independence a democracy within an area containing one quarter of the world's population. We have a long tradition of friendship with China, marked by aid in the Boxer rebellion and by the Nine Power Treaty pledging China aid against aggression. Despite the efforts of Secretary State Department for action in accord with that treaty, when Japan invaded that country in 1937 by launching armies single-handed for over 7 years. Since we entered this World War, China with the aid of Russia, we said we could get to her, has mobilized her resources to defend her country, culminating in a decisive battle against Japan.

"Our government is definitely committed to policies in support of China and in the Cairo agreement assuring that Japan shall be expelled from all territories which she has taken by violence. We are now carrying out our agreement by transporting Chinese troops to Manchuria which is to be part of China. Forty percent of Japanese troops are in Manchuria, China territory. We have not yet fulfilled our responsibility to China.

"China, with a wonderful history going back more than 5,000 years, is building a democracy, unifying her people and reaching for the modern scientific progress of the Western World. Even in the midst of revolution and of seizure of its coastal cities, China has developed metallurgical, chemical and textile industries in the interior of the country where only handicraft industries existed before.

"A real labor movement is making progress in China together with the development of cooperatives. There are pivotal institutions in the development of democracy. In the name of the American Federation of Labor we pledge them our support in their efforts to build a constitutional democracy and unify the Chinese people for peace at home and internationally."

PRICES ZOOM UPWARD 8TH CONSECUTIVE WEEK

Washington, D. C.—For the eighth consecutive week, market prices advanced during the week ended November 10, 1945. Higher prices for both agricultural and industrial commodities resulted in a rise of 0.2 percent in the index of commodity prices in primary markets prepared by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, bringing the index to 106.1 percent of the 1926 average, equal to the high point reached during the week.

Average prices for farm products, foods, fuel and lighting materials and chemicals, still were slightly below wartime peaks, but all other commodity groups were at, or above, the highest level reached during the war.

President Gives Congress New National Health Plan

Truman's 5-Point Program

Washington, D. C.—A summary of the specific recommendations made to Congress by President Truman for a national health program follows:

Recommendation 1. Construction of hospitals and related facilities. Federal aid should be provided for construction of hospitals, health centers and other facilities where they are needed. These are essential if doctors are to be able to furnish modern services.

Recommendation 2. Expansion of public health, maternal and child health services. The existing cooperative health programs between the federal and state governments should be expanded with the help of increased federal funds. All parts of the country and all groups in the population should be able to benefit from them. Expansion is especially important to prevent disease and to provide services for mothers and children. Approximately 40 million persons in the United States live in communities which still lack full-time public health services.

Recommendation 3. Medical education and research. We cannot remain satisfied with what we already know about health or diseases. The opportunities for further health progress are very large. Research pays large dividends. Professional education should keep pace with progress. Federal grants in aid should assist and encourage research, so that we shall learn more about how to prevent and cure disease. Federal aid should also support more adequate professional education. Special emphasis should be paid to research on the cause, prevention and cure of cancer and mental illnesses.

Recommendation 4. Prepayment of medical costs. Everyone should have ready access to all necessary medical, hospital and related services. The costs of essential medical services should not stand in the way of the patient who needs care.

A compulsory national health insurance system is proposed toward attaining this goal. It would be a system for prepayment of the costs through contributions while people could afford, and which are paid while they are well and working.

This is not socialized medicine.

Private practice would continue. Families of worry about medical costs and would encourage them to receive care as soon as it is needed. Thus, it would also work toward preventing serious disease.

Patients would remain free to choose their doctors. Doctors would remain free to accept or reject patients. Hospitals would continue to manage their own services. Voluntary organizations could participate in the insurance system, either in providing services and if paid therefor, or to assist in administration, depending on their functions.

Decentralized administration would provide for needed local adjustments in fees, methods of payment and arrangements for services.

Doctors and hospitals could expect improvement and stability of income, at the same time that patients are relieved of unexpected and burdensome costs.

Recommendation 5. Protection against loss of wages from sickness and disability. Disability insurance would protect America's families by guaranteeing some income when they work or permanently disabled.

The President urged the Congress to consider such health legislation now. This five-point program would strengthen the nation to meet future problems. It would contribute greatly to freedom from want.

Labor-Management Parley Nearing Voting Stage On Industrial Peace

Washington, D. C.—The Labor-Management Conference expects to get down to the business of actually voting recommendations for the minimum industrial peace machinery by Nov. 26.

Until now six sub-committees have been busy drafting reports on the wide variety of issues listed in the agenda. These reports will now be whipped into shape by the executive committee for presentation to the full conference in the form of a definite program.

As was to be expected, the press is already condemning the conference as a failure because it has not as yet come up with a magic formula or panacea for strikes and lockouts. Despite advance warnings that anything of this sort was expected, the newspapers are riding the conference hard, thus giving aid and comfort to members of Congress who would like to start the ball rolling on restrictive anti-labor legislation.

The CIO is still trying to throw a monkey-wrench into the conference machinery by insisting that the Labor-Management parley settle its pending wage disputes in the steel, automobile and other industries. The conference has refused categorically to consider any specific dispute, but will deal with wage policy improvements.

Pursuing its traditional policy of trying to fool the public, the CIO is spreading propaganda to the effect that the AFL is against higher wages because its delegates oppose injection of the wage issue into the conference procedure.

The AFL position, as set forth many times before, is that wages are one of the foremost objectives of all AFL unions and the federation is throwing its full support to their demands. However, he insisted on, wages must be determined by unions and employers through collective bargaining on a plant or an industry basis. The Labor-Management Conference would certainly be wrecked, he predicted, if it attempted to set forth any definite wage policy. Furthermore, no employer or union would consider itself bound by a conference decision which does not take into account the particular merits of each case.

New Housing Bill, Endorsed By AFL, Gets Bi-Partisan Senate Support

Washington, D. C.—A compromise General Housing bill, assured of bi-partisan support, was introduced in Congress by Senator Robert F. Wagner, Democrat, of New York.

The new bill represents an agreement between Senator Wagner, and Senator Taft, Republican, of Ohio. Hearings on the Wagner bill, S. 1, before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, will begin Dec. 10 before the chairman.

It is hoped that passage of this legislation will result in a substantial home construction program to meet the serious housing shortage and to provide millions of new jobs over the next 10 years. The bill includes the major features of the AFL's housing program.

Combining the Federal Home Loan Bank board, the Federal Housing Administration and the United States Housing Authority into a single agency under one policy-making head, the bill concentrates on enabling private industry to expand its activities in the so-called middle market, or "low man's land" of housing, by strengthening the FHA system so as to reach a greater number of families in that market.

"The first main plan for this middle income group," Senator Wagner explained, "provides for insuring mortgages for owner occupancy from 20 percent to 90 percent of the cost of the housing to 95 percent, thus reducing the down payment required for the middle income family to a minimum.

"To make the terms more favorable, it extends the period of amortization from 25 to 35 years, and 40 years. It also reduced the maximum interest rate allowable under the statute from 5 percent to 4 percent. It provides additional insurance protection to promote the flow of capital on these more favorable terms.

Another major provision affecting private financing of rental home ownership or rental projects permits insured mortgages of as much as 95 percent in the case of mutuals or public instrumentalities, and 90 percent in other cases, at interest of not to exceed 3½ percent with a maximum amortization period of 40 years.

A 2-year program for urban redevelopment in which both private and public funds would be utilized, also is set forth in the measure. For this purpose the federal government could loan $500,000,000 to cities and towns by land assembly and clearance projects started and which must be repaid in full within 5 years. It could loan $50,000,000 annually, repayable in 45 years, for the same purposes.

To expand low-cost public housing, the measure sets up a 2-year program to cost the federal government a total of $625,000,000, and Senator Wagner estimated this would provide about 500,000 additional units of low-rent public housing.

All Workers and Dependents To Be Covered By Health Insurance

Washington, D. C.—President Truman called upon Congress to enact a new national health insurance program which would cover and protect all Americans "who work for a living" and their dependents.

His message was immediately hailed by AFL President William Green and declared that the principles which the federation has long espoused. Mr. Green called for universal support of legislation to carry out the President's plan.

The legislation was promptly introduced in Congress by Senators Wagner and Murray and Representative Dingell.

The President reiterated several times in his message that the five-point program he submitted is not "socialized medicine" and should not be misrepresented as such.

He insisted that the health of the American people is a national concern and must be treated as a national problem on an insurance basis.

Besides health insurance, the President's program included increased grants to states for construction of hospital facilities; expansion of public health, maternal and child care services; sickness and disability insurance for workers and federal grants to public and nonprofit institutions to promote medical education and research.

In most respects, the program was similar to that contained in the original Murray-Wagner-Dingell bill which was originally drafted by the American federation of Labor.

Mr. Green pledged support to the President in a telegram which said:

"I congratulate you on your vigorous and forward looking message to Congress on national health. Your five-point program is in complete accord with the program formulated and approved by the AFL. It meets the urgent human needs of our nation and merits support of all men of good will."

In his message the President said:

"Under the free enterprise system our people would continue to get medical and hospital services just as they do now, on the basis of individual voluntary decisions and choices. Our doctors and hospitals would continue to deal with disease with the same professional freedom as now. There would, however, be this all-important difference: whether or not patients get the services they need would not depend on how much they can afford to pay at the time."

Mr. Truman said that Americans would be free to choose their own physicians and hospitals, and free also to pay for medical care by joining the health insurance system—just as they are free to send their children to private instead of public schools, although they must pay taxes for public schools.

Likewise, he said, physicians would remain free to accept or reject patients. They would be allowed to decide for themselves whether they would participate in the health insurance system full time, part time, or not at all.

Hospitals, he said, would have the same freedom of action.

The President said Congress that he favored the broadest possible coverage for the national health insurance system.

"I believe," he said, "that all persons who work for a living and their dependents should be covered under such an insurance plan. This would include wage and salary earners, those in business for themselves, professional persons, farmers, agricultural labor, domestic employees, government employes and employes of nonprofit institutions and their families."

In addition, the President said, needy persons and other groups should be covered through premiums paid by the state and public agencies. Congress, he said, should vote appropriations to reimburse the states for such premiums as well as for expenditures made by the states in paying for medical services provided by doctors and hospitals to needy persons.

The program would be financed largely through increases in social security taxes.

MARK STARR DELEGATE TO UNO CONFERENCE

New York City—Mark Starr, educational director of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, was selected by the Department of State as one of the two advisers to the American delegation to the London conference, which will set up an educational and cultural organization of the United Nations.

Mr. Starr is the only member of the labor movement to be connected with a labor union in an educational capacity. He regards his selection as a recognition of the importance of adult education in the proposed UNO educational program.

AFL DEFEATS CIO UNION BY TWO TO ONE MARGIN

Sanford, Me.—The American Federation of Labor won a hotly contested election among employes of the Goodall Sanford Mills here by a vote of 1,285 to 668 for the CIO. John J. Murphy, New England Regional Director of Organization, was congratulated on the victory by AFL President William Green.